



A

Topsy-Turvy Christmas

A Cantata for Christmas

Book by EDNA RANDOLPH WORRELL

Music by
CLARENCE KOHLMANN

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A TOPSY-TURVY CHRISTMAS

CHARACTERS

GRANDMA	-	-			-	Who is entertaining at Christmas.
PRUDENCE						
PANDORA						
ROY	-	-	-			Grandma's Guests,
ROB						
And eight other boys and Girls.						
GRANDMA'S HELPERS -	-	-				Six or eight girls.
DREAM FAIRIES	-	-				One for each guest.
EDUCATED CATS	-	-	-	-	-	Six or eight boys.
TALKING DOLLS	-	-				- Six or eight very little folks.
OLD KRIS.						

COSTUMES

GRANDMA.—Old fashioned dress, gray wig and spectacles.

PRUDENCE.-Very pretty old time dress.

PANDORA, ROY, ROB, and other children wear ordinary clothes.

GRANDMA'S HELPERS .- All alike as maids in caps and aprons.

DREAM FAIRIES .- Thin white tarletan dresses trimmed with tinsel. They carry wands.

EDUCATED CATS.—One piece pajama suits covering feet, of white canton flannel, bonnets of same with ears pointing forward. Necks are tied with ribbon with huge bow at back.

DOLLS.-May be dressed variously as Soldier, Sailor, Rag, Infant, French, etc.

SCENE—For both parts, a large room in Grandma's house.

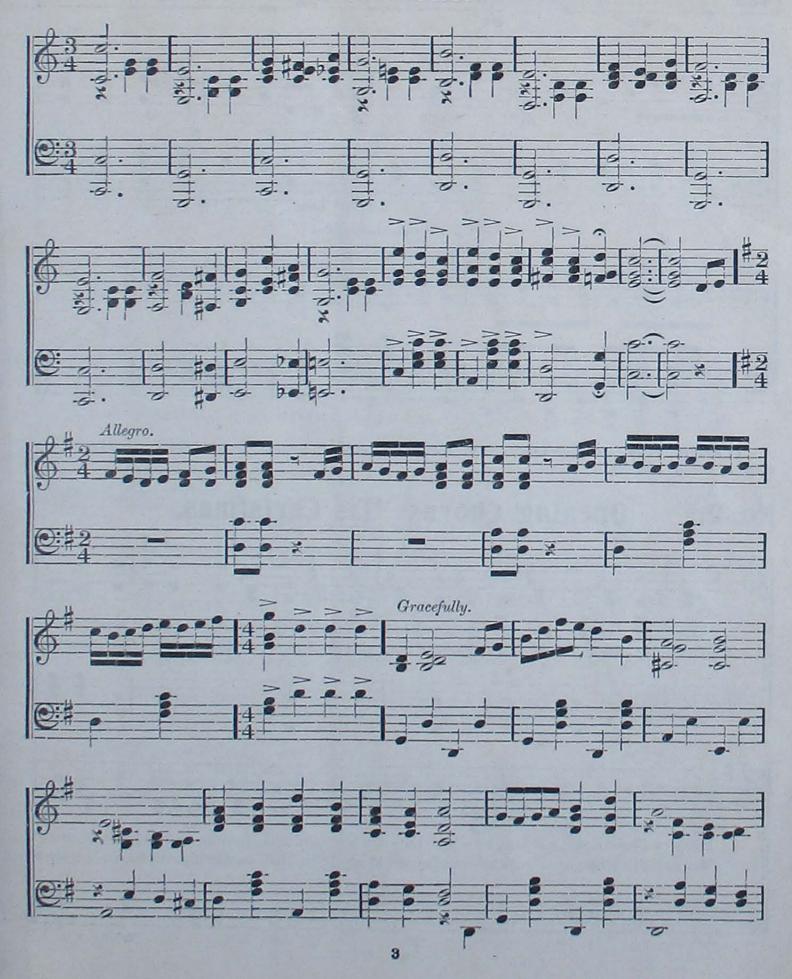
TIME—Just before Christmas.

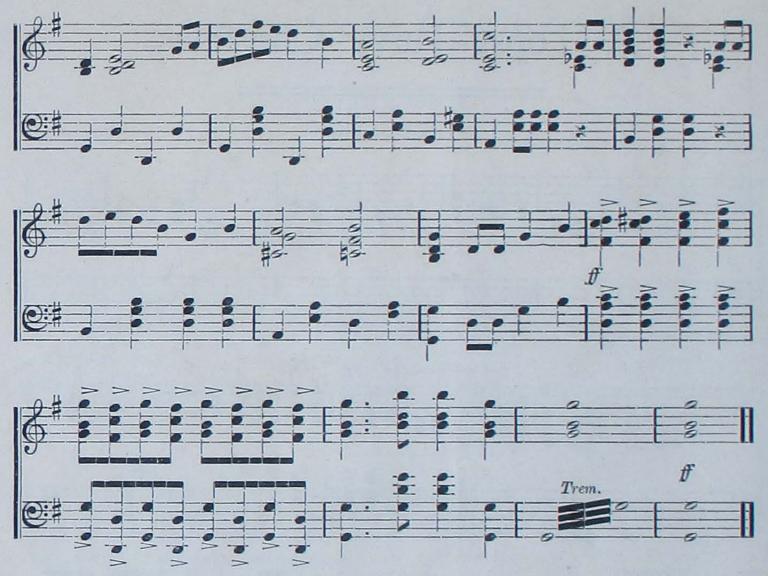
IMPORTANT NOTICE

The Solos and Choruses may be sung independently of the cantata and many of them will be found to be excellent concert numbers. They are—"'Tis Christmas," (Chorus). "Playing Grandma," (Solo and Chorus). "Curiosity," (Comic Chorus). "You'll Grow That Way," (Solo and Chorus). "Good Children's Dreams," (Fairy Chorus). "The Kitchen Band Parade," (Comic Chorus). "Topsy-Turvy House," (Chorus). "Topsy-Turvy March," (Instrumental). "When I Was Young," (Solo). "Weaving a Spell," (Fairy Song). "The Educated Cats," (Characteristic Chorus). "Talking Dolls," (Characteristic Chorus). "I've Got it in My Pack," (Old Kris Song). "Fairy Minuet," (Instrumental). "Scrub! Puff! Laugh!" (Ensemble Chorus).

A Topsy-Turvy Christmas.

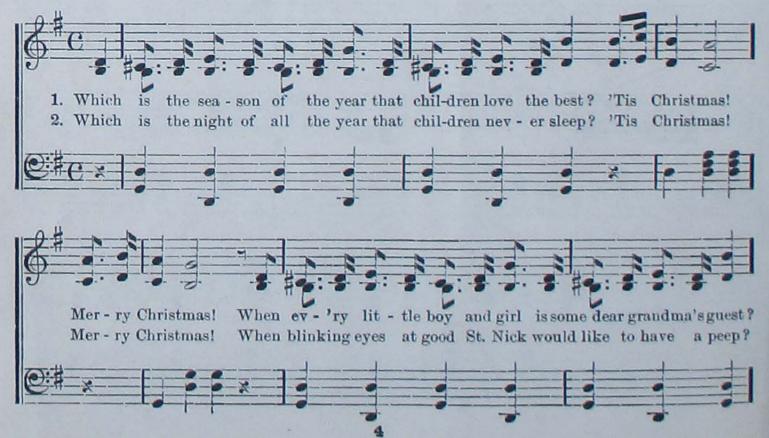
INTRODUCTION.

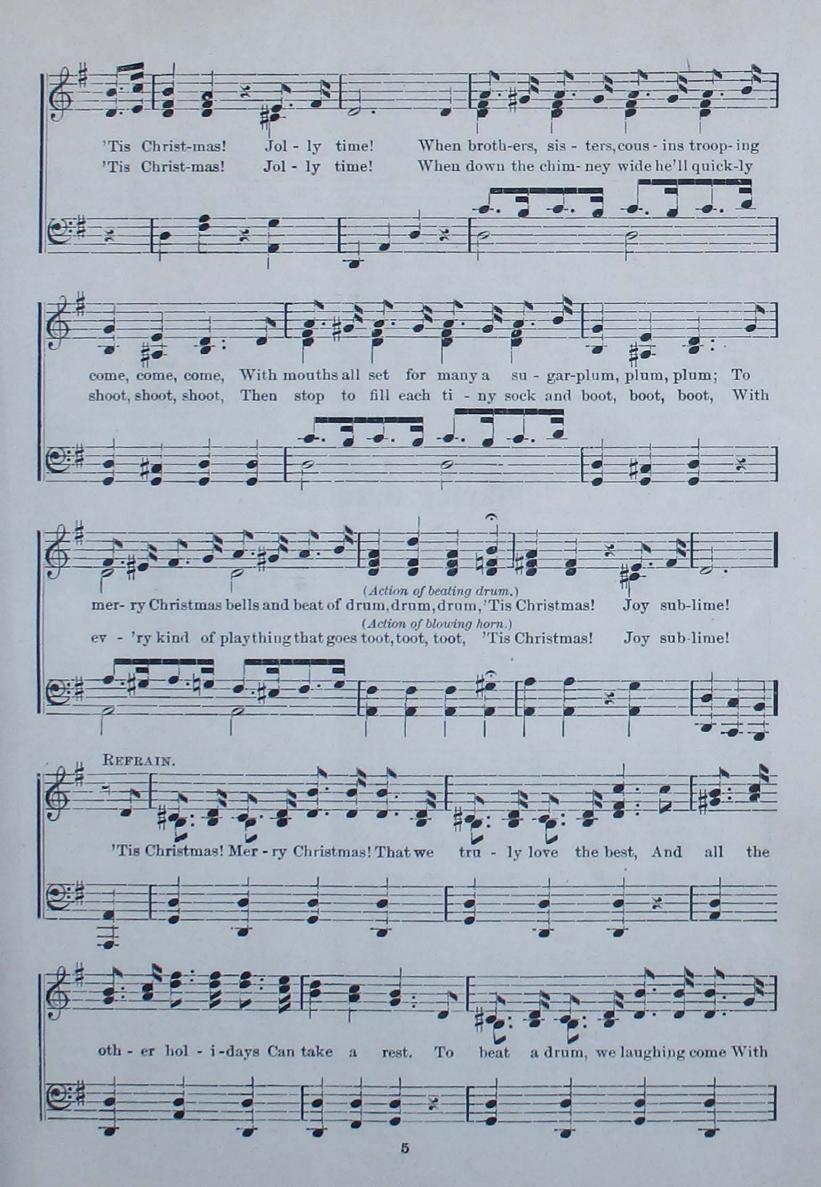




(Curtain rises on Pandora, Roy, Robb and other guests in a pretty group. They sing opening chorus.)









Roy (after song). Well, we've hurrahed for Christmas, now let's hurrah for Grandma's house; it's the jolliest place I ever struck!

ROBB.—I think it is, too. Here goes, one, two, three.

ALL (waving handkerchiefs).—Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurrah! PANDORA.—Grandma certainly does let us do lots of things.

Roy .- You bet! We're going to chop our own Christmas tree down after a while.

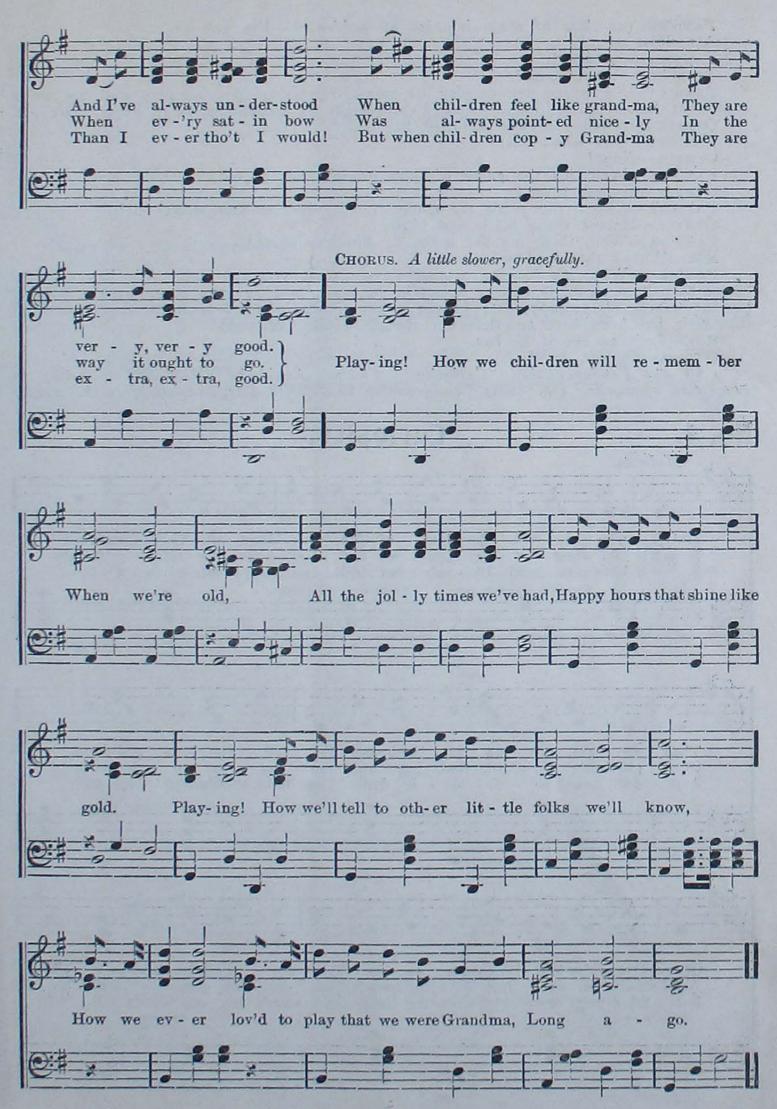
ROBB.—And stay up half the night to trim it, too. Won't that be great!

PANDORA.-We did that last year. I'd like to think up something brand new. (Sits

to one side in thinking attitude.)

PRUDENCE (entering with a rush). Just see what Grandma has been letting me do! Isn't this dress a darling! I've had it on all the morning, playing I was Grandma when she was young. I've had the grandest time! (Sings "Playing Grandma," with appropriate gestures. All but Pandora join in chorus.)





PANDORA (at close of song, jumping up suddenly).-I've got it!

ALL.—Got what? Pandora.—An idea!

PRUDENCE.-What about?

Pandora.—Something new to play, of course. Dressing up is all very well, but we've done that hundreds of times. Now I've thought of something we've never done yet. Others (crowding around her) .- What is it?

Pandora.—You won't tell?

OTHERS.-Nope!

PANDORA .- Well, it's the game of-you promise not to tell?

OTHERS .- Honest Injun!

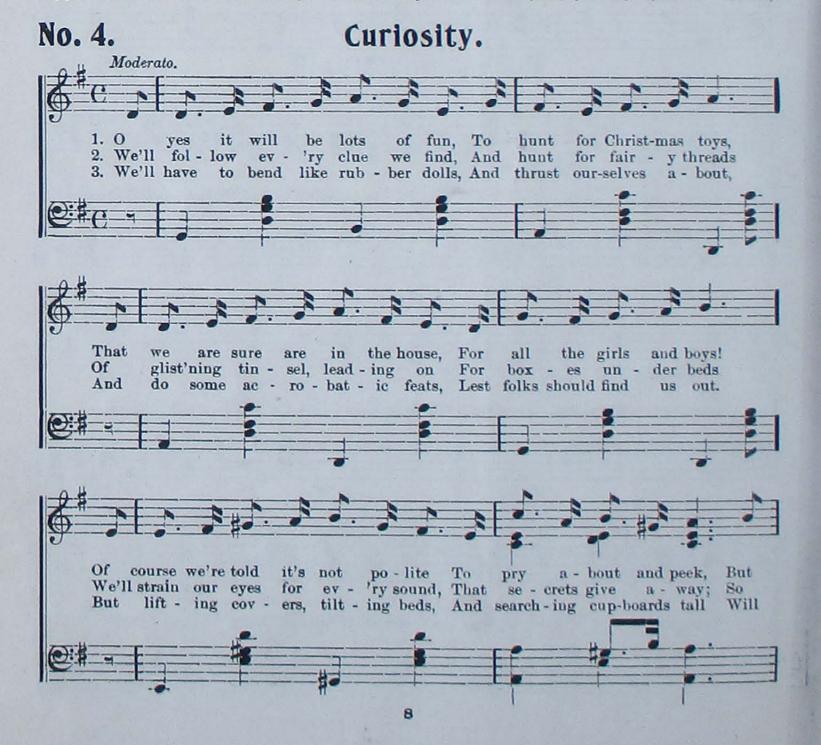
PANDORA.—Listen, then; it's the game of f-i-n-d—sure you won't tell? OTHERS.—Honest truly, black and bluely! PANDORA.—Well, then, it's the game of Finding Things.

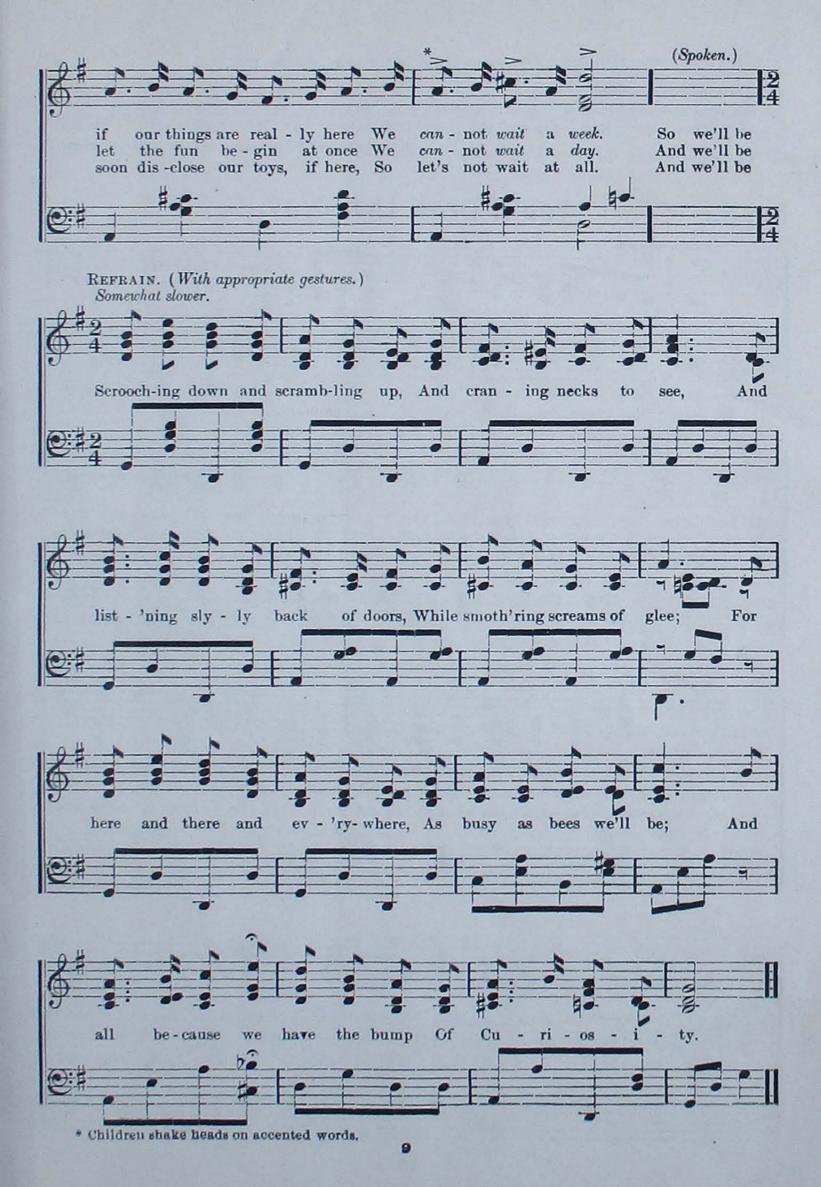
Rob.-What's that anyhow?

Pandora.-Why, it's looking around to see what you can find. It's lots of fun! There have been so many strange noises in the house and so many queer bundles brought in that vanish right away, that I believe (continues in awed whisper, finger on lips) that Kris has been here and left our things before Christmas! Roy.—Let's go see if he has.

OTHERS .- O, yes, let's!

(All but Prudence sing "Curiosity." Chorus should be acted out, according to suggestion of words. On "bump," children tap heads with fists, pausing after the word.)

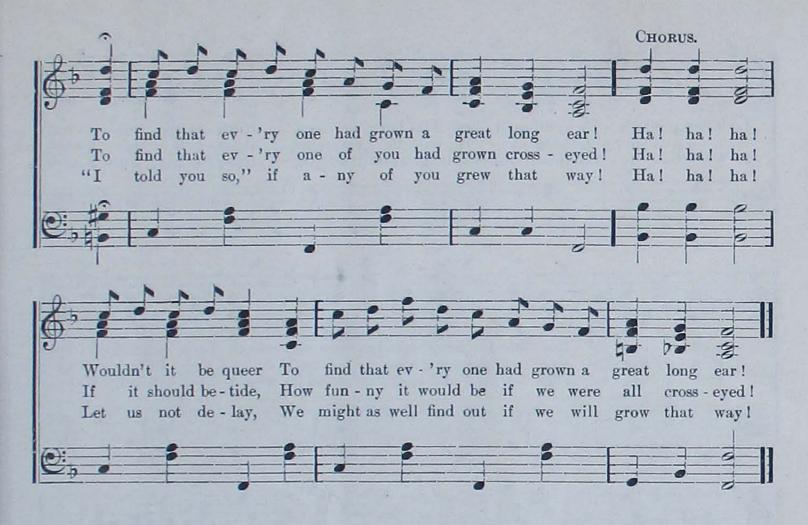




PRUDENCE.—I don't believe Grandma would like us to do that.
PANDORA.—She won't care.

PRUDENCE.—Yes, she will too; besides, you might grow that way. (Sings "You'll Grow That Way," others, joining on lines indicated. On "Ha! Ha! Ha!" children should put hands on hips and throw heads back. Pandora leads them off at end of song.)





PRUDENCE (sitting center on prettily draped chair).- I hope nothing will happen to them. I wouldn't go with them for worlds; not in these clothes anyhow. I just feel so good! but, oh, so tired. I think I'll rest here a little while and then-I'll-go-Prudence falls asleep before finishing. Lights are turned low and Fairies enter from opposite sides of platform to music of "Good Children's Dreams," moving arms as if flying. They sing first verse standing in a V-shaped figure, with Prudence at the point. On "Hush-a-bye," etc., arms swing rhythmically from side to side. In second stanza Fairies step in time to music and form a group back of Prudence, and on the word "Queen" the central Fairy places a crown on her head. In third stanza Fairies "bow" on the word, Prudence waking and clapping her hands on "laugh." Forming a circle, they then step forward and backward toward throne, then, breaking, they again form two lines and step off softly as verse is concluded. In refrain, nod heads forward and backward on first line and from side to side on second, repeating these motions when words again occur. On "rest little heads so," rest cheek against folded hands. After third verse, refrain may be sung from behind scenes. Prudence again sleeps as curtain falls, music being very softly played.)

(Colored lights on the scene will make it very effective.)

No. 6. Good Children's Dreams.







PART II.

(Scene the same as Part I. Curain rises on Prudence, still sleeping. Enter Grandma.)
GRANDMA.—Wake up, dear, I want you to do something for me.
PRUDENCE (rubbing her eyes).—Oh, Grandma, I have had the loveliest dream! It

was all about Fairies.

GRANDMA.-You may tell me about it after a while. Run downstairs now and tell all my little helpers in the kitchen to come up right away. I want to give final directions for Christmas.

Prudence.—Yes, Grandma. (Runs off.)

GRANDMA (taking out list).-Let me see! I wonder if I have everything down. I must get five more bushels of fruit for the cake, and enough mincemeat for a hundred pies, at least. Then there is the holly and the mistletoe. Young folks can't get along without mistletoe, at least they couldn't in my girlhood. What's this? (Scrutinizing list.) Oh, yes, the mantles; they must be cleared for the stockings, and the chimney must be fixed so that Kris—oh, here you are! (Enter Helpers.) (They have cooking utensils slung over shoulder, like drums, on which they tap in time as they enter with soldier-like precision, with forks, knives or spoons. Grandma sits to one side, while Helpers line up and sing "The Kitchen Band Parade." After song they stand opposite Grandma, facing her.)





* Tap pans lightly on first beat of each measure. Roll, if possible, on words "rum-dum-dum, or give each word a tap, ending with heavy beat on last syllable of "parade."

GRANDMA.—What fine little Helpers you are! I'm so glad to have you with me, now that we have so much company in the house, for I am sure you can do everything beautifully. You have a place for everything and everything in its place, haven't you?

HELPERS.—No, ma'am.

GRANDMA.—The brooms and brushes are in the closet, aren't they?

HELPERS.—No, ma'am.

GRANDMA.—Aren't the dishes in the cupboard?

HELPERS.—No, ma'am.

GRANDMA (excitedly).-Isn't the silver on the sideboard?

HELPERS.—No, ma'am.

GRANDMA.—Tell me, quick, what has happened to everything, or I shall faint."

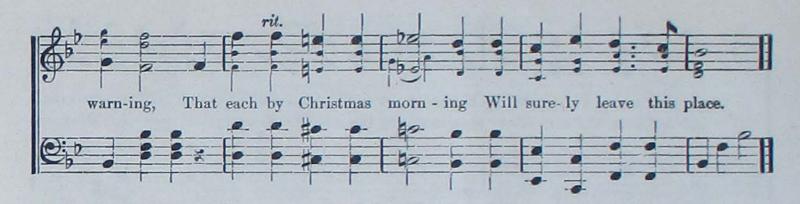
(Helpers sing "Topsy-Turvey House.")

No. 8.

Topsy-Turvy House.





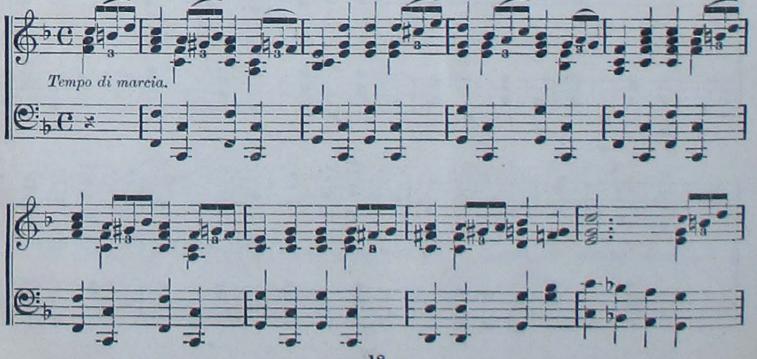


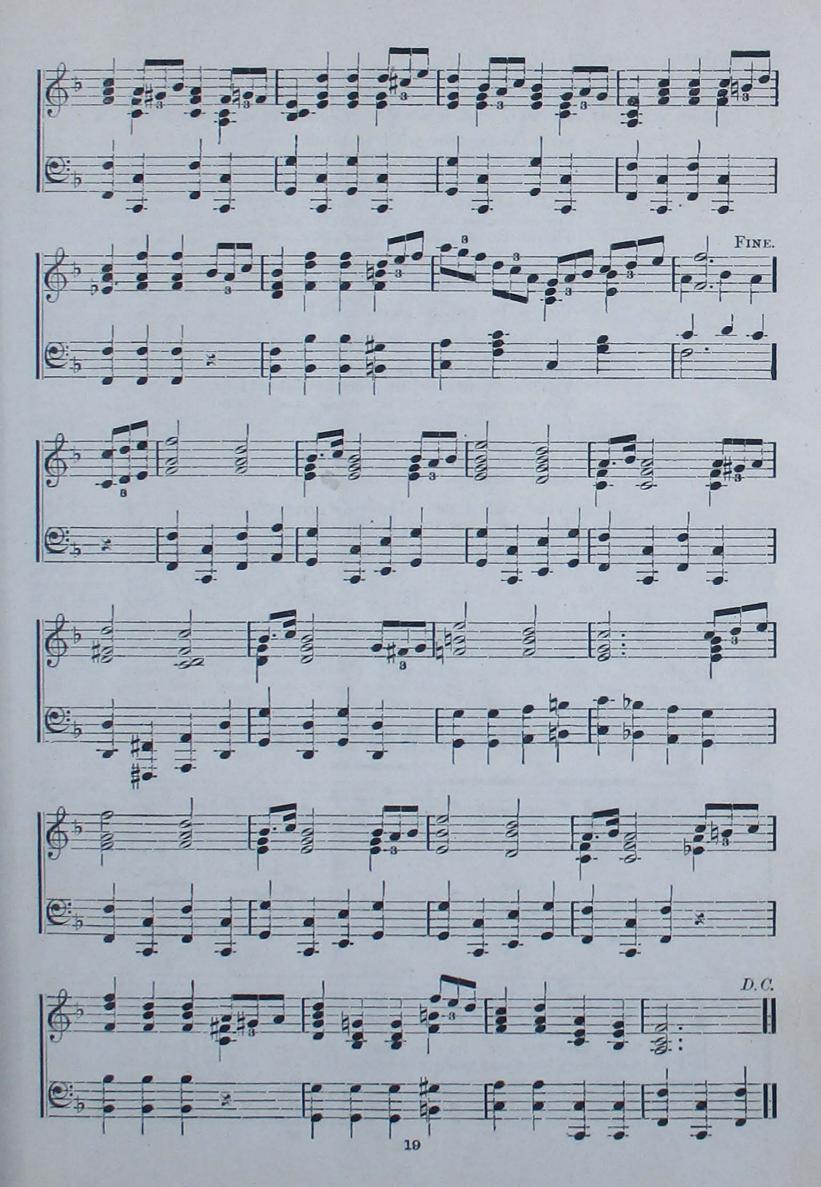
GRANDMA (after song).—This is too much! (She appears to faint, and Helpers fan her with forks and spoons.)

PRUDENCE (who has crept in and has been standing at Grandma's side).—Grandma, dear, don't feel so bad. It's just this way. You see all the children, except me, thought it would be fun to hunt for Christmas presents. They imagined that Kris had come too soon, and, of course, they mixed things up while they were hunting. That's all. I told them if they got too curious they'd grow that way, and they have; but if they're good I would think they'd grow right again, wouldn't you?

Grandma.—I don't know, child. I'll have to see them first. Here they are now. (Enter children, "Topsy-Turvy" march. In the interval after their exit all the children's clothes should have been put on backward. Girls' hair should be combed over faces and tied with ribbons, and masks tied on back of heads. Hats will conceal the top of the masks. The boys should also wear masks on back of heads, and thin hats or caps, with holes for breathing and seeing, should be worn over faces. This will give all the children the appearance of walking the wrong way. They enter in single file and march once around the platform. Reaching front center, they march straight to back of platform, where they divide right and left, forming two lines. Lines march separately to front center, and, as leaders meet, they bow and march together toward back. Other couples do the same. At back, first couple clasp hands, allowing others to pass under the bridge as they move toward the front. Each couple does same on reaching the back. This figure should be executed twice, when all take hands and march in a ring. Marching half-way around, they bow, then, reversing their hands so they will be walking with backs toward center, they continue the ring until circle is completed, when they bow again. After this they follow one of their number, who leads them in a winding march, ending in a semicircle. As they stand, children's backs are really to audience, though their faces, which are only masks, appear to be. They take various grotesque attitudes.)







GRANDMA (inspecting the group) .-

I really don't know what to do, They're all aslant and quite askew!

(Taking each one separately and turning it around, she continues.)

Poor thing! She tried to brush her hair, Instead she's brushed her shoes with care.

Your feet have got a wayward spell, And how they'll act 'tis hard to tell; I'm sure that when you go to play They'll carry you the other way.

If this child isn't put to bed, He'll soon be standing on his head.

You really are an awful mess!

But this one's just as bad, I guess,

How curious it is to see Your heels where just your toes should be. You've chased yourself around and 'round And yet your toes cannot be found.

(Child spins 'round.)

You have a look about your face As if, somehow, 'twas out of place.

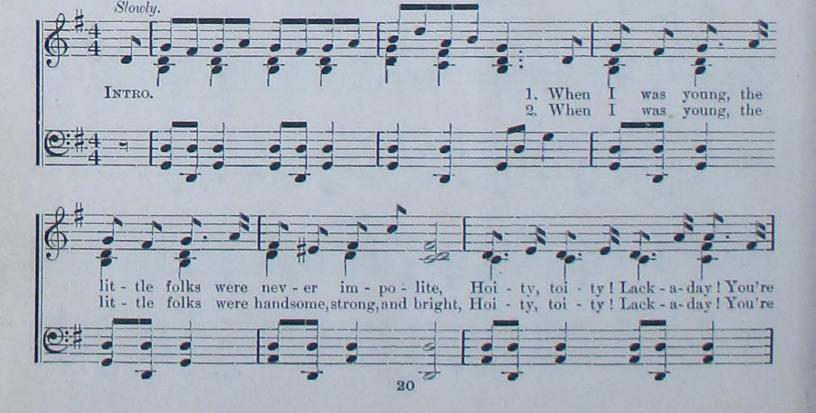
What shall I do! The sight of you Just makes me topsy-turvy, too!

PRUDENCE.—Don't be worried, Grandma. I'm sure they'll all come right. (To children) You're awfully sorry, aren't you? (They nod.) And you'll never do it again, will you? (They all raise right hand.) You see, Grandma, they are all good once more, and I'm sure when they go to sleep the Dream Fairies will come and make them look the same as ever.

Grandma.—That's all very well, but—(Sings "When I Was Young." Children stand very still in grotesque attitudes during song. Helpers line.up, right and left, and act chorus as directed. They remain pointing while children march off. Children make low bows to Grandma as they pass her, by throwing hands over heads and trying to touch tips of shoes with fingers. Grandma cries and wrings her hands as last one exits.)



When I Was Young.



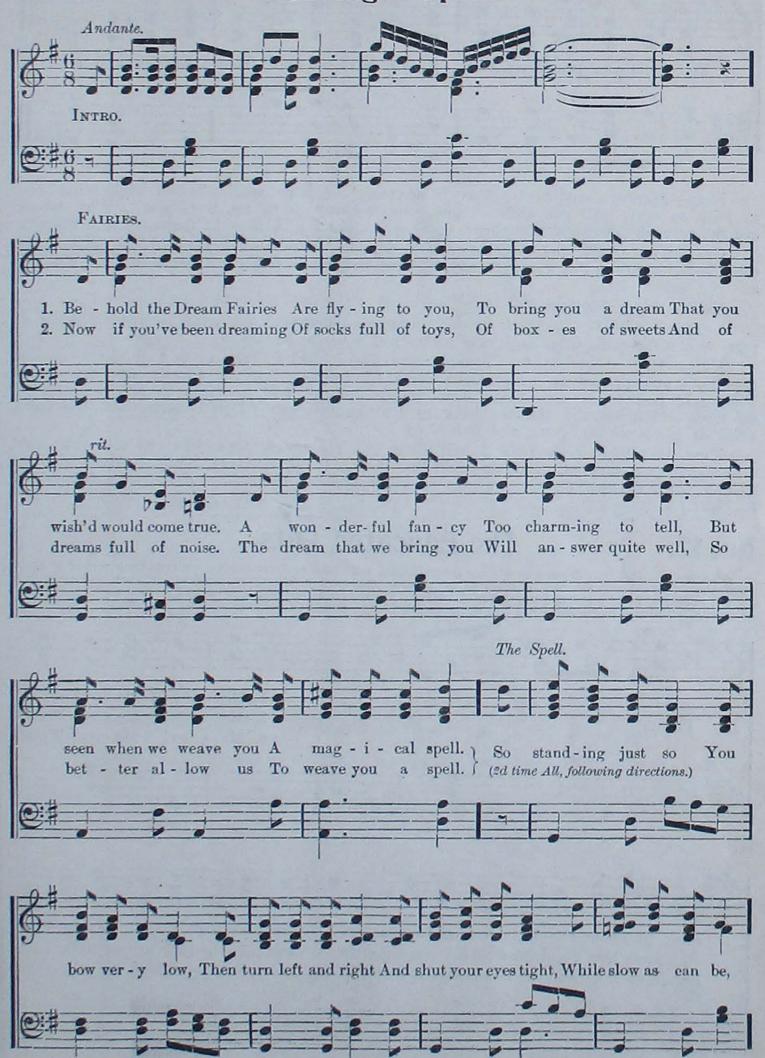


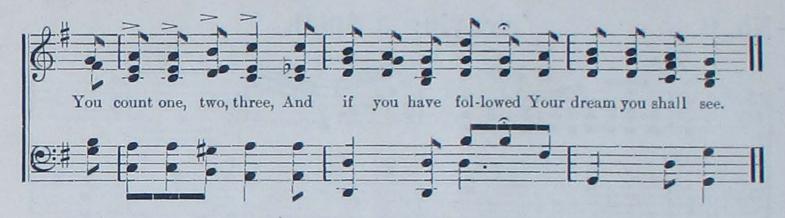


Prudence.—Never mind, Grandma; I'll see if I can't get the Dream Fairies to come right away. They can do anything. Listen! I think I hear them now. (Fairies humming like bees, on a single note, flutter in, waving wands. They sing "Weaving a Spell." To act "The Spell," wands are clasped with both hands over head in first line, then dropped slowly to side as they bow on second line. On "turn left and right," they form an aisle from front to back of platform. They next shut eyes and count as words indicate, and on word "see" all point with raised wands toward back center, using inside hand. Helpers imitate Fairies when singing "The Spell" after second verse. During the singing of "The Spell," after the second verse, sleighbells are heard in the distance, becoming louder and louder. A voice calls out, "Whoa," and Kris comes bounding from back center into the fairy circle at the end of the singing.)

No. 11.

Weaving a Spell.





Keis.—Merry Christmas! Merry Christmas! I hope we'll all find each other just as jolly as ever. All you children got your stockings hung up, have you? Why, where are the rest of the children anyhow. (He looks about.) I thought there were more here.

GRANDMA (advancing).—Welcome, Old Kris! We're always glad to see you—if we can; but this year, I'm sorry to say, I have bad news for you. Some of the children are not presentable.

Kris.-Not presentable?

GRANDMA.—No! The fact is, they became so curious over what they were going to receive at Christmas that they have all turned into curiosities.

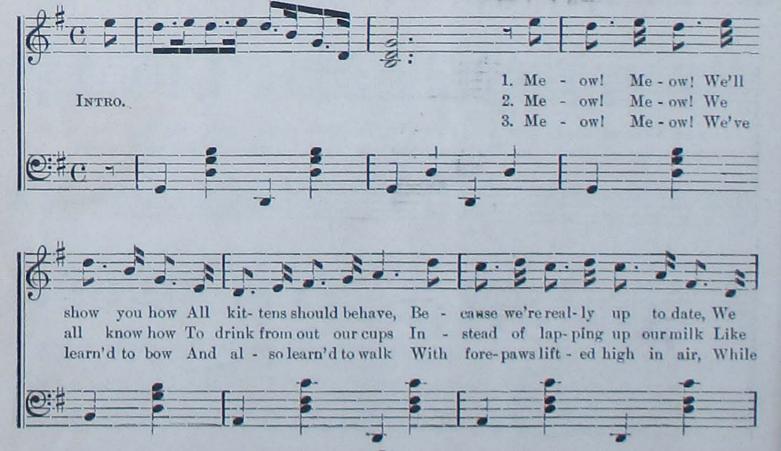
KRIS.—Ha! Ha! Ha! Curious were they? Why, that is just a slight disease that goes around among the children every Christmas. But the Fairies will cure them. They will just touch them with their wands and all will be right in an instant. Fly off now and bring the children back as fast as you can. Don't touch them too hard. (Fairies wave wands, bow, and flutter off.)

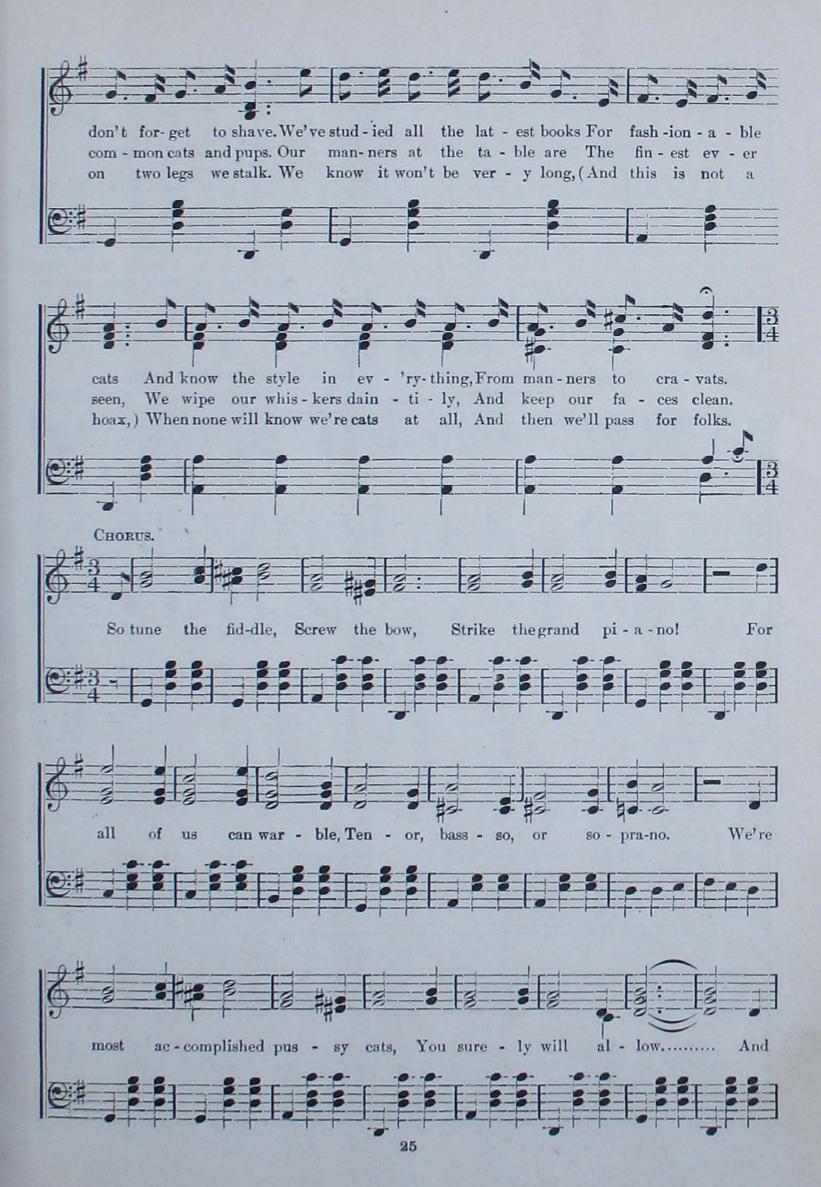
Kris.—While we're waiting I will show you some new toys, just out this year, that I brought for a surprise. I think you'll like them. (Calls.) Here, Kitties! Here, Kitties! (Enter the Educated Cats.) (Those on stage applaud the Cats. After song they stand to right.)

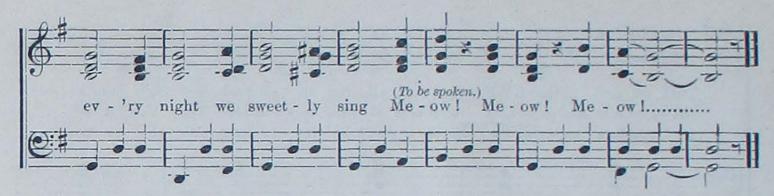
No. 12.

The Educated Cats.

(Six or eight children dressed in white canton flannel with tails of same stuffed with cotton attached at back' Head should be entirely covered with cap of same, eyes, nose and mouth alone showing. Ribbon and large bow should encircle neck. Pointed ears should be sewn on cap. Three whiskers should be drawn from each side of mouth. Children come in with a bouncing step, holding hands in a begging position, and sing.)







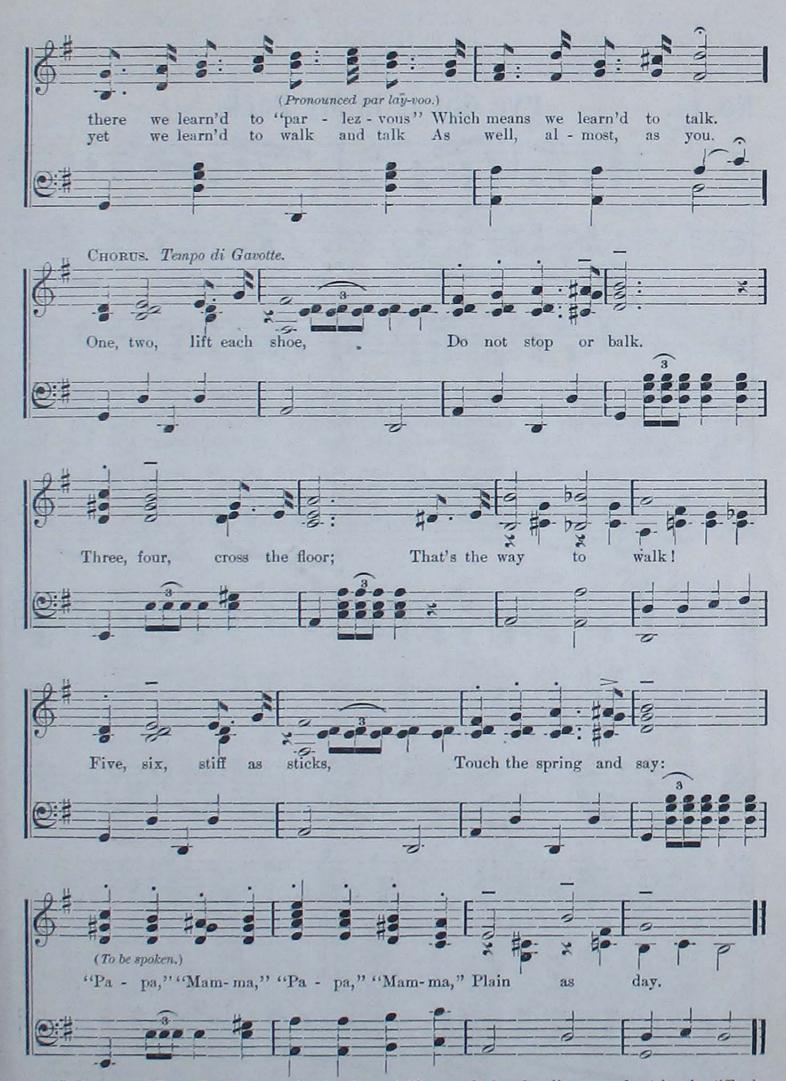
Kris.—You'll now see something even more wonderful than the Cats. These are the very latest thing in Dolls. (Dolls enter stiffly.) We have to handle them very carefully, so they won't fall over or get broken. (He winds them up, they sing, and are applauded. Kris places them to left at end of song.)

No. 13.

Talking Dolls.

(Small children dressed as dolls are carried or helped in. They are wound up before singing.)



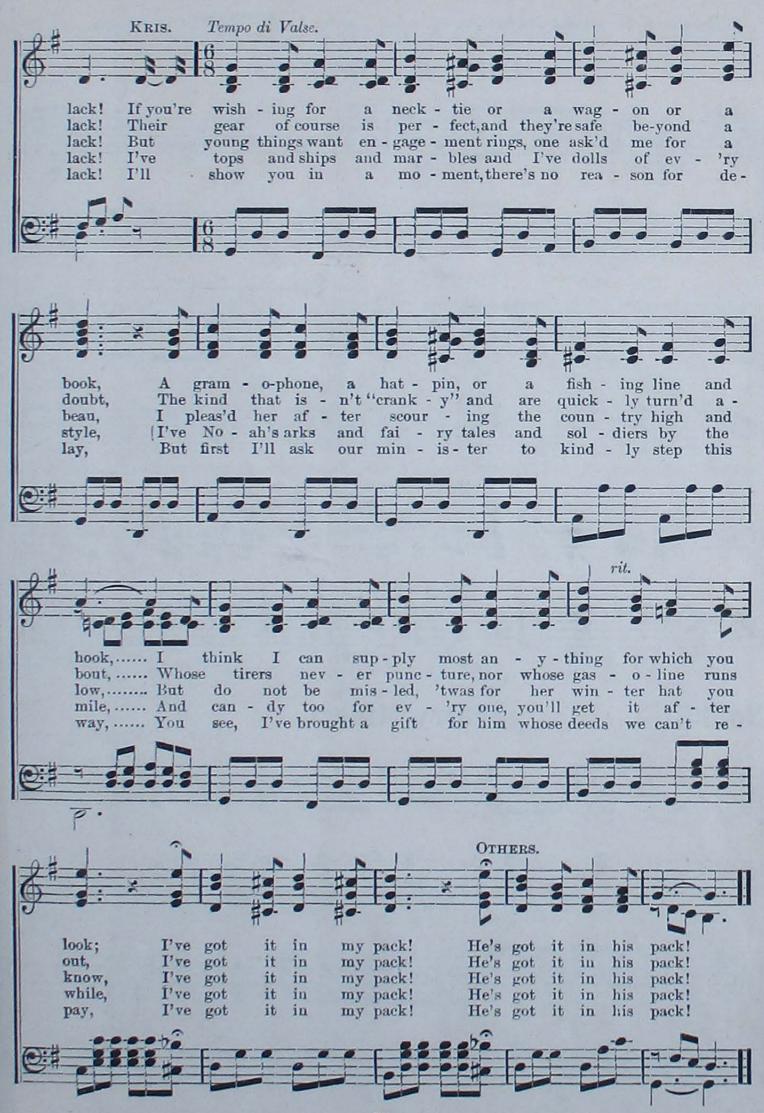


(Dolls move stiffly as if walking, on first four lines of Chorus On last four lines spread out hands stiffly in front of body and press inward in jerks. "Papa" and "Mamma" should be spoken in imitation of dolls voices.

Kris.—Well, I can't let Cats and Dolls get ahead of me. I'll have to sing for you, too, I suppose. (Sings "I Got 'Em in My Pack." At close, "Fairy Minuet" is played, while children, prettily dressed (white preferred) are driven in by Fairies, who use ropes of tinsel for lines and wands for whips. They gallop about till Kris says, "Whoa!")



* Candy may be distributed at end of this verse if desired, changing phrase you'll" get it after while" to, "come help me spoil the pile."



Entre Act Gavotte.



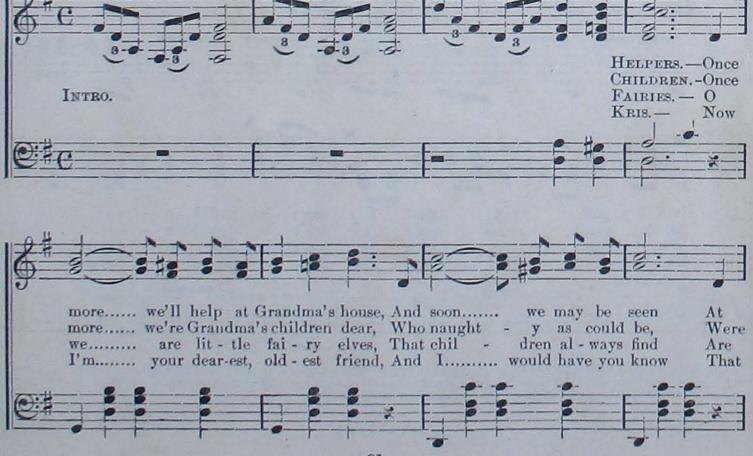


Kris.—Whoa! Whoa! Here you are, safe and sound and prettier than ever. I knew the Fairies could fix you straight again. And now, Grandma, I hope you and your household will forgive these busybodies. Will you?

GRANDMA AND HELPERS .- We will! We will!

(Final song is now sung, each group taking front in turn. Helpers retire by dividing to right and left, standing on opposite sides of platform. Children sit on floor front. Fairies kneel back of children. Kris, Grandma and Prudence stand center, surrounded by Cats and Dolls. The chorus of "Good Children's Dream" may be sung ad lib in conclusion.

No. 16. Ensemble—Scrub! Puff! Laugh!





On lines marked "All" action should suit each word. For example, in first stanza instead of singing, blow four "puffs" with mouth. In second stanza give imitation of spanking by clapping hands, on third make kissing sound, throwing kisses with finger tips. Last stanza, all laugh.

(CURTAIN.)



